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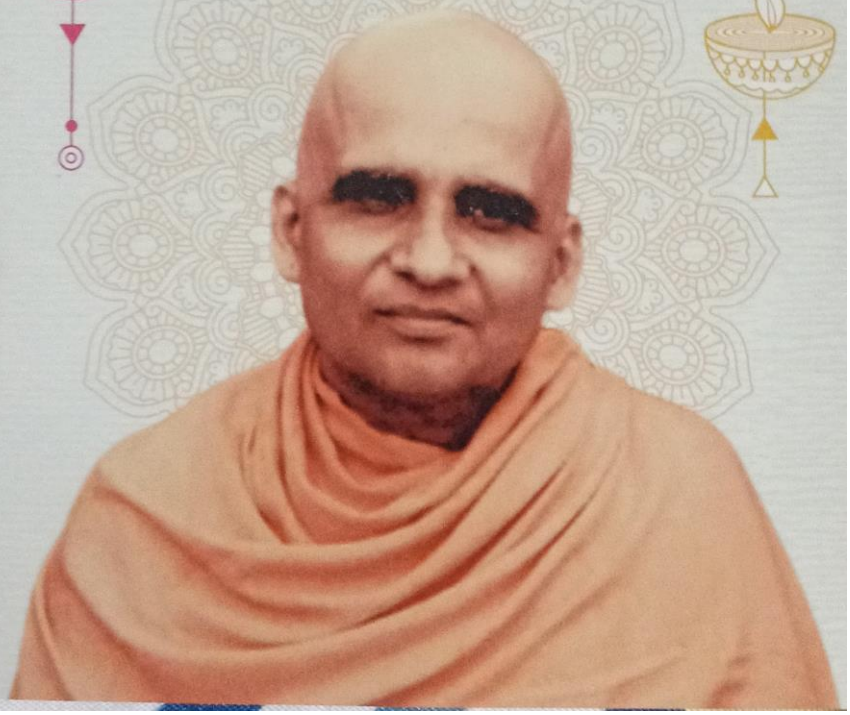
Christ Consciousness

Swami Krishnananda



CHRIST-CONSCIOUSNESS

Sri Swami Krishnananda

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The 25th of April 2022 marks the auspicious occasion of the Birth Centenary of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj. To commemorate this sacred occasion, the Headquarters Ashram has decided to bring out booklets comprising the illuminating discourses of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj for free distribution.

Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj arrived at the holy abode of Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj in 1944, and remained here until his Mahasamadhi in November 2001. Swamiji Maharaj was a master of practically every system of Indian thought and Western philosophy. "Many Sankaras are rolled into one Krishnananda," said Sri Gurudev.

Over the years, Swamiji Maharaj gave many profound and insightful discourses during Sunday night Satsanga, and on holy occasions such as Sri Gurudev's birthday, Sri Krishna Janmashtami, Mahasivaratri, etc., and also during Sadhana Week and Yoga Vedanta Courses conducted by the Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy of the Ashram. Sri Swamiji Maharaj always spoke extempore, spontaneously, without any preparation, and every discourse was fresh, unique, and divinely inspired. The audience was bathed in that stupendous unfathomable energy that radiated from Swamiji Maharaj during these discourses.

We are immensely happy to bring out some of Swamiji Maharaj's discourses in booklet form as our worshipful offering at his holy feet on the blessed occasion of his Birth Centenary.

The present booklet, **'CHRIST-CONSCIOUSNESS'** consists of a talk given by Swamiji Maharaj on Christmas Eve in the year 1973.

May the abundant blessings of the Almighty Lord, Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj be upon all.

-The Divine Life Society

CHRIST-CONSCIOUSNESS

"Empty thyself and I shall fill thee." This is a wondrous single sentence message of Jesus the Christ. The Spirit is not a quantity, and it is opposed to all quantitative measurements and conceptions. "Blessed are the poor in spirit," is another suggestive statement of the Christ. We cannot understand what is meant to be poor. For us, to be poor is not to have money, grains and gold, not to have a field, a house and friends, and not to be recognised in society. That would be poverty, economically. We cannot think of poverty except in an economic, material and social sense. Likewise, the idea of emptying oneself-as far as our minds can understand-is a physical displacement of content, which is far from the idea of the Spirit which is implied in the above single- sentence message. The Christ-consciousness, and not the personality of Christ, is what is to be taken into account here in our understanding of this statement. There is a difference between Christ and Christ-consciousness. This fact was repeatedly emphasised by the Christ himself in many of his declarations as recorded in the New Testament. He never regarded himself as a person, nor did he ever indicate that it was a person who was speaking when he spoke. He always referred to "Him that sent me". He was very much fond of referring to "Him that sent me" He said, "I am here to proclaim the Law of Him who sent me here. It is not my law that I am demonstrating or proclaiming to the world." The Spirit that spoke through him was not a creature of time.

There is a very humorous and most significant statement of his. "Before Abraham was, I am." What does it mean? "Before Abraham was, I am" is a contradiction, grammatically. It conveys no sense. It is a blunder of grammar to say "I am before Abraham was". But that is the real Christ that spoke. And it is from the standpoint of that reality of Christ that the 'present' was precedent even to the 'past'. The present precedes the past. How could it be? And that is what is implied in saying, "Before Abraham was, I am." The Spirit is a present and not an event or a content or a creature in the passage of time which is usually dissected into the past, present and future. The Spirit has no past, no present and no future. And this is the Christ-consciousness.

From the above point of view, what would it mean to empty oneself and what would it mean to be filled by It? This is the great philosophy of the Spirit. We are heading towards real Yoga when we speak about these things. Christ was a great Yogin, a Master Yogin, one of the greatest Yogins the world has produced, a Yogin in the true sense of the term. He was perpetually in unison with the Spirit, drew sustenance from the Spirit and operated upon the Law of the Spirit in the world or the realm of matter. Mathematics was not his way of thinking. Otherwise how could a single loaf become a basketful, overflowing, flooding and capable of feeding thousands and yet remaining full after the feeding was over. It was not arithmetic that worked there, because one cannot become many and many are not the same as the one. Our consciousness has grown upon it several accretions or layers of material concrescence. The philosophical way of thinking is slightly different from the ordinary way of thinking of the man in the street.

I do not mean that we should be philosophers. But we should know the techniques of philosophical thinking, i.e., the art of thinking in a peculiar manner which differs entirely from the give-and- take, economic or commercial attitude of thinking which man usually entertains

in his mind. All our thinking is commercial. We cannot think in any other way. But the Spirit is non-commercial, because it is non-material. Anything that we speak of in regard to the Spirit has to be metempirical, and we have to shed the prejudice of earthly ways of thinking even before we take the first step in the practice of the way of the Spirit. All prejudices have to be shed. This is one of the conditions of emptying ourselves. It does not mean that we have to vomit what we have eaten. We have to vomit the prejudices of the mind. Hard it is to overcome a prejudice. And prejudice has grown like a fungus or a mushroom on our very consciousness itself. We take for granted many things. Unproved hypotheses are taken for granted; and they become the byword of the street, of the home, of society, of administration and of even international understanding. Everything is based on certain prejudices. But the Spirit does not care for either the nation or the international setup. It is something superior in its value and content. To be spiritual is hard even to think and conceive; more difficult it is to practise the way of the Spirit. Personal and logical attempts and the so-called scientific attitudes do not help us here. Science itself has become a dogma, though it parades its knowledge of non-dogmatism. Logic is based again on a dogma, of certain presupposed values which themselves cannot be proved by logic itself. There is no such thing as non-dogmatic thinking as far as the ordinary man is concerned. Everything is a dogma. You take for granted that the world is. Who told you that the world is? It is something taken for granted. It is a hypothesis. You cannot prove it by logic, except by saying that you see it. And that you see it, is not a great proof, for you can see even a phantasmagoria if your head is reeling. That the world is, that the body is a content thereof, and that the world is ruled by the quantitative measurements of arithmetic and commercial laws, are hypotheses on which we base our arguments, even in law courts.

But the Christ didn't come to rule the world of Caesar. As he put it, "Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's." Don't mix up the two elements. The Christ has nothing to do with what is Caesar's, which is a quantitative measurement like that of silver and gold, of give and take, of commerce and trade, of the quantitative mathematics of the feeble mind caught up in the network of space and time. The Christ-consciousness stands far above this common way of give-and-take thinking. It is from this superior and sublime point of view that we have to understand what it is to empty oneself and to be filled by the Spirit. When He says, "Empty thyself and I shall fill thee," it is not that the Christ as Jesus, the personality, is going to sit on your head. He cannot fill you, as a person. How can one person fill another person? It is unthinkable and meaningless. It was the consciousness that was meant as being capable of filling the emptied vessel of human personality. How can Spirit fill you? The Spirit is not a content, because the very idea of a content is again quantitative, and the Spirit is not a quantitative measure. It is not like water or any other liquid that can fill a vessel. It has no weight. It has no length and breadth. It is not here or there. It is the quintessential value that is immanently present as the very constitutive stuff, the very fibre, pith and being of anything that can be or anything that ever is. The Spirit cannot be thought of, because the Spirit is the very pre-supposition of thought. Even before you start thinking, the Spirit is there behind it impelling your thought. So there is no such thing as thinking the Spirit, and, therefore, there is no such thing also as measuring the Spirit with the yardstick of human thought. How can the Spirit fill you, unless you have the capacity to receive It or contain It! Where is the container for the Spirit!

This wonderful gospel, "Empty thyself and 1 shall fill thee", is complemented by another equally wonder-statement of his, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." How can the

kingdom of heaven be within you? You are such a small frail personality, a little body, occupying one or two feet of width of the earth. How can the kingdom of heaven be contained inside you? All his statements seem to be marvellously conspicuous and significant of something that the human mind has not been habituated to think or understand. Have you ever seen a kingdom being contained within the personality of a human being? Yet, it is said by the Christ. It is something like saying that the ocean is in a drop, which is unthinkable. All these statements of the Christ appear to be inscrutable because we cannot understand what the Spirit is from the point of view of which he spoke always. The very standpoint was quite different.

You know that today people say we have a kind of arithmetic where two and two need not necessarily make four as in the Euclidean way of thinking in geometry and arithmetic. Plane geometry is different from spherical geometry, for example. Ordinary geometry of the triangle is different from trigonometry. The values, the measuring and the calculating rules of geometry on a surface do not apply to geometry in a sphere. It is on account of this that they say that under certain given conditions of the physical bodies of the cosmos, the three angles of a triangle need not necessarily make two right angles, though usually this is the rule, according to Euclid. The three angles of a triangle always make two right angles; but this is not true always. There are conditions of existence even in the physical world, in the macro-cosmos for example, or in the micro-cosmos, the subatomic layer as they call it, where this geometry does not hold good. Two and two need not make four. It can be less or it can be more. You think the man has gone crazy because he blabbers something which makes no sense. But, these people say that it is not they who are crazy. but those who hold on to the prejudice that two and two make four only and not more or not less. The world is wider than we can think of. If even humanly conceivable arithmetic and mathematics can elude the grasp of ordinary understanding, as pointed out by these discoveries of modern day, what to talk of the Spirit! The Spirit is non-mathematical and non-measurable, because of its being non-material. And our minds are used to thinking only in terms of measurements and calculations. Therefore, a kingdom cannot be conceived to be contained within a person. The kingdom of heaven cannot be contained by you. A vast realm or a huge empire cannot be inside the personality of a human being. Yet, this is possible, under certain other given conditions. The part can contain the whole. Is it possible? Have you ever seen a part containing the whole? You have heard of the whole including the part. How can a part include the whole? It is impossible, because the whole is superior to the part quantitatively, again. We again think only in terms of quantity. Because many parts make the whole, the whole cannot be any one part. This is our quantitative way of thinking. But the whole need not necessarily be a quantitative totality. There are wholes which are not necessarily totals of the parts in a material sense.

I shall give you one small example of this kind of peculiar totality, which is not merely the sum of the parts of which it is constituted. The wholeness of the personality of your own body is an example. You have a sense of wholeness of your being. You have ten fingers, ten toes, two eyes and several other limbs of the body. And you have a sense of togetherness and wholeness, compactness and totality in your being. You never think that you are made up of members. You do not go on thinking: "I have ten fingers, ten toes, two eyes." Who thinks like that? You never think of the limbs of your body and never for a moment calculate in terms of the discrete parts of which your body is formed. But you always imagine yourself to be a total-"I", "I am here", "I have come", "look at me". When you talk of 'I' or 'my' or 'me', you do not refer to any limb of the body, nor do you also refer to a totality of the limbs of your body.

You refer to another significant wholeness that is present in each and every part of the body, which gives you the confidence of your being a single indivisible something. This indivisibility that you are, which is not a mathematical or a physical totality of the limbs of your body, is wholly present in each one of the parts. This is a very difficult idea to imagine. Every part of your body is a wholeness as far as it is concerned.

On account of this mystery of living organisms, the great philosophical thinker called General Smutts evolved a philosophy called 'Wholism' which means that everything in the world is a whole. According to him, every cell of the body is a whole and every atom is a whole, by itself. It has a completeness of structure. There is no part in this world; everything is a whole. Every protoplasmic cell in the leaf of a tree is a whole by itself struggling to maintain its individuality and harmony with other cells of the leaf of the tree. Every cell of our body-the living organism of which we are constituted-is a whole by itself, and it struggles to live by itself, and wants to maintain and sustain itself, because it is a whole by itself. The wholeness that is significantly present in an organic completeness of structure is different from the totality of the rupee coins or dollar coins or stone heaps, brick heaps, etc. That totality which we are thinking in our minds is different from the totality that we have to conceive spiritually, or at least non-materially. It is from this standpoint that the kingdom of heaven can be within you. Just as the wholeness of your personality is immanent or present in each cell of your body, the entire kingdom of heaven is within you. The kingdom of heaven is not a country. It is not a physical empire. It is a significance, a meaning, a connotation and a value. We call it the Spirit, and the Spirit can be contained everywhere. It does not require space to exist. Therefore, it can be wholly present even in the smallest of atoms. Thus, is the kingdom of heaven within you.

All this is not philosophically expounded in the Bible. Great spiritual masters-the Christ, Krishna or the Buddha -do not go on commenting on their statements. They make suggestive statements which have to be expounded by lesser minds later on, for the sake of understanding by ordinary minds.

So, from this point of view of the capacity of the Spirit to be contained even within a cell of the body, what would it be to empty oneself and to be filled by It. The accretions, as I have already mentioned, that have grown upon consciousness have to be gradually shed and wiped out. They have to be scrubbed off. The objective accumulations over the Spirit have to be cast asunder in order that the Spirit may blossom forth in its full sublimity and loftiness of stature. To empty oneself, therefore, cannot mean anything else. It means to stand by the Spirit and not to swear by any material value.

If you give something, you will lose that thing This is our mathematics. The more you give, the more you lose. It is very clear. But, "Give and it shall be given," says the Christ. How can it be possible? Have you ever seen somebody giving you merely because you give? He takes away everything you give and goes away. But, what the Christ says is that you will not merely be given back what you give, but overflowing, pressed and shaken will it be given back to you. If you give one, you will get back hundreds, thousands and millions, says the Christ. This, again, is a non-mathematical calculation. How can you get hundreds and thousands, if you give only one? "Give and it shall be given," is what the Christ says. And He adds one adjective to it which is stunning, astonishing, awe-inspiring. It shall be given back to you, not merely in the measure that you have given, but overflowing and pressed. In a measure, the contents are pressed so that it may contain more and more, and then when it is overflowing

abundantly, in that abundant form will it be given back to you. So, do not be afraid that you will lose by giving. Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was a standing monumental example of this spiritual philosophy of giving. I have never seen a person like that, nor do I hope to see another, perhaps. We believe that by giving we lose. But, the Spirit says that by giving we gain. So, everywhere you find that the law of the Spirit is different from the law of matter. The law of the Christ is different from the law of Caesar. The law of God is different from the law of man. This is wonderful!

Now, to empty oneself, therefore, would be the tendency to stand by the Spirit, and this tendency to stand by the Spirit is to recognise the character of the Spirit in the world of matter. We have lost consciousness of the Spirit itself. We are conscious only of matter. To be aware of the Spirit is to be aware of its characteristics simultaneously. You cannot think of fire without thinking of light and heat. The idea of fire is automatically associated with the idea of heat and light. Likewise, the idea of the Spirit is automatically associated with omnipresence and a capacity to permeate and penetrate through everything.

To include and transcend all things is another characteristic of the Spirit. What does it mean by the phrase 'to include and transcend? This again can be explained by an analogy. All this cannot be explained logically. The consciousness of your waking state includes and transcends all the contents of your dream. In dream, you saw wealth, you became a big officer, you drew a large salary, you had a sumptuous meal or you were an emperor. But when you wake up, you have lost everything! Have you really lost anything? The very consciousness of having woken up is transcendent to the consciousness of all the wealth and other things that you appeared to possess in dream. Would you rather be a king in dream, or an ordinary man in waking? You would like to be an ordinary person in the waking state rather than be a king in dream, because the value of the king in dream is inferior to the value of the ordinary man in waking. It is the difference in the consciousness that matters and not the beggarhood or the kinghood. The difference lies in the state of consciousness, and not in what one is conscious of. Even as the contents of dream are subsumed, included and transcended in the waking consciousness, all the values of the world are included and transcended in the consciousness of the Spirit Supreme. We are not going to lose the world when we gain the Spirit. Many people are afraid of going to the Spirit or God, because they think that they may lose the world. There are many who think: "What about our friends? What will happen to them, if I go to God? Oh, my dear children are all here suffering; I do not want to go to God." This is foolish way of thinking because this is, again, a material way of thinking, mathematically construed and commercially understood. We are still businessmen. We cannot go beyond this idea.

My dear friends, when you go to God, your friends will be seen there. Why are you crying about the friends? You will see them in a better way, with a better eye, than you are able to see now. And if you are intending to help them, well, you will be able to help them in a better way than now. Your strength will be much more and your capacity to help will get enhanced. All that is in the world is included in that realm of God, and nothing is excluded. We are not going from the world to God. Again, we have an idea of quantitative running. Look at this prejudice! We are not moving from the world to God, as if going from one planet to another in a rocket. It is not a spatial movement. It is a transfiguration of consciousness, like that which happens on waking up from dream. When you wake up from dream, do you lose anything? Have you lost your dream friends, kingdom and the wealth? You are only happy that the devil has gone. "What a nightmare I had in dream! It has gone and I am happy now." This is your

feeling when you wake up. Do you say, "Oh, my kingdom has gone. I was a king. I have lost everything"? Do you go on beating your breast? Similarly, nothing untoward will happen to you when you reach God. The Spirit includes all things that are valuable in the material world.

It is because of this fact that the Christ was not understood by the people. How can matter understand the Spirit! And so he was crucified. We are crucifying God every day in our life, in some form or the other. We are killing Him by our affirmation of the ego, the assertion of material values and an adamant adherence to this quantitative way of thinking that 'by giving we lose', 'by going to God we have to lose the world,' and so on and so forth. All these are false assumptions, contrary to Truth.

So, once again I say that to empty oneself is to empty oneself of the materialised accretions that have apparently grown over the universality of the Spirit. And then, you are filled with a flood of the oceanic abundance of God-consciousness. When you rise to the level of God, you are filled with an ocean, as it were, inundating you from all sides with a nectarine taste, beauty, grandeur and magnificence. When God comes, He does not come like a man coming from one direction. He comes from all directions, because He is everywhere. He does not come only from the East or the West. He is not a human being. He is the universal Spirit that enters your personality. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa used to say that God entering man is like a mad elephant entering a thatched hut. Another mystic said that it is like an ocean entering a drop or flooding the rivers. All these are only images to give an idea as to what the supreme magnificence of Spirit is. They all think alike, because they stand on the same pedestal of realisation. The more we succeed in thinking along these lines, the more are we spiritual, the more are we Yogins. Yoga is not becoming something in the social sense. It is not also doing something with your hands and feet. It is a transformation of your inner stuff of thinking and feeling, willing and understanding, in a completeness that surpasses your present physical personality. That is where the Christ is born. We say that Christ and Krishna were born at midnight. They are never born when the sun is bright, which means to say, when it is daylight to the senses. Ya nisha sarvabhutanam tasyam jagarti samyami, yasyam jagrati bhutani sa nisha pashyato muneh, says the Bhagavadgita. What you see, the sages do not see; and what the sages see, you cannot see. What is day to you, is night to them; and what is day to them, is night to you. For you, God-consciousness is like darkness, a night of ignorance, and God does not exist at all. Therefore many people go to the extent of even denying God-they cannot see Him- whereas the sages see only God and nothing else. They do not see the world as the world. A person who has been cured of his cataract in the eyes does not see two moons. He does not say, "There were two moons and now one moon is lost." There were no two moons, and there was only one moon. This is the truth. Likewise when the spiritual medicine is administered to the sick soul of the human being, it assumes the spiritual health which enables one to think in a new reoriented manner altogether, and man becomes a superman. A man who thinks in this way is a superman. He is not an ordinary man. He cannot be called a man at all. A superman is a temple enshrining the superhuman Spirit. When God thinks through man, we call him a superman. Such was Christ, Buddha and Krishna. But all the great wonderful masters of mankind were thoroughly misunderstood; their teachings were never understood, but misrepresented, misapplied and abused to the doom of man, towards which we seem to be heading today, unfortunately.

But God is great, and everything shall be well in the realm of God whose Omniscient eyes see everything. The recognition of the Spirit is, therefore, the recognition of God's

omnipresent existence. And to be filled with God is the same as to be filled with the Spirit. For that, we have to empty ourselves of all the externalised prejudice of objective thinking We should not hang on objects for our sustenance. Man does not live on bread alone, which means to say you do not live merely by the quantitative stuff of the world. You have something in you which is more than quantitative, which is superior to even the entire quantity of the cosmos. The Spirit is larger than the universe itself. The universe is after all a quantity. And Spirit is larger than that. Atyatishtad- dashangulam: The Spirit is above the universe, says the Purusha Sukta.

With this background of spiritual refreshment of our thoughts, we have to contemplate daily the mystery of creation, the majesty of God, the greatness of spiritual life, the stupendousness of yoga and the glorious consummation that is ahead of us which is supreme Liberation, Christ-consciousness or God- realisation.

When He says, "Empty thyself and I shall fill thee," it is not that the Christ as Jesus, the personality, is going to sit on your head. He cannot fill you, as a person. How can one person fill another person? It is unthinkable and meaningless. It was the consciousness that was meant as being capable of filling the emptied vessel of human personality.

-SWAMI KRISHNANANDA